

# P-PATCH COMMUNITY GARDENING PROGRAM

## RULES FOR BEEHIVES

### Requirements for Starting Beehives in P-Patches

Bee hives are permitted outright as a use. Interested participants ***must complete a proposal form***, which will be evaluated by P-Patch staff and garden. Approval is based on applicant experience, funding, hive location, maintenance plan, and community (P-Patch and neighborhood) outreach and education. Beehives must be registered with the state Department of Agriculture (RCW 15.60.030) prior to April 1 of ***every year***. Refer to <http://apps.leg.wa.gov/rcw/default.aspx?cite=15.60.021>. You must supply the P-Patch Program with a copy of registration. [Registration form](#) is annual and cost \$5 for 1-5 hives.

### Code Requirements-Hives and Enclosure

- No more than four (4) hives (colonies), each with only one (1) swarm, shall be kept on lots of less than ten thousand (10,000) square feet. (SMC 23.45.150)
- Hives shall not be located within twenty-five (25) feet of any property line except when situated eight (8) feet or more above the grade immediately adjacent to the grade of the lot on which the hives are located or when situated less than eight (8) feet above the adjacent existing lot grade and behind a solid fence or hedge six (6) feet high parallel to any property line within twenty-five (25) feet of a hive and extending at least twenty (20) feet beyond the hive in both directions. (SMC 23.45.150)

### Minimize People Bee Interaction

- Hives must be in an enclosure
- Enclosures must be at least 6' in height. Fencing can be of material that provides air flow but must direct the flight pattern of the bees up 6' to avoid flight into people.
- Select an apiary location that is as much out of the way of pedestrians and gardeners as possible, but still provides the bees with functional exposure to sunshine. Place the front of your hives -facing the direction with the most sun
- Set the hives back no less than 3 feet from the enclosure material (fencing) to allow the bee's room to maneuver and land, thus keeping them from flying into the fencing.
- P-Patch requires education and notification signage. Signage should be placed at the entrance to the apiary and should include:
  - Information alerting visitors to the presence of bee hives
  - Health and safety information including language about staying away if allergic and call 911 if stung
  - Appropriate behavior around bees
  - The benefit of bees
  - Swarm control contact information (beekeeper cell phone number and swarm control website address)
  - Beekeeper contact information and address of garden
- Enclosure must be locked and access to the hives/bees should only be given to those who are certified or have gone through training by an experienced beekeeper. Limited access is for the safety of all concerned. P-Patch staff should have access to enclosure at all times.
- Beekeepers will be responsible for requirements related to city nuisance and abatement requirements SMC 10.36.020 and SMC 10.36.030.

## Requirements for Maintaining Hives

- P-Patch hives must have a trained beekeeper to care for the hives and must be approved by P-Patch staff through the proposal process. If the approved beekeeper changes, notification of this change and the experience level of the new beekeeper will be sent to P-Patch staff for approval.
- Hives must be maintained in movable framed hives (SMC 10.36.010).
- To make sure that bees are properly looked after, Beekeepers will visit hives regularly and must visit hives every 7-10 days during swarm season.
- The beekeeper shall be well versed in swarm control and reasonable precautions shall be employed to minimize swarms (SMC 10.36.010).
- Aggressive colonies shall be removed or re-queened.
- Access to hives will only be given to beekeepers and gardeners who have been trained or are under mentorship.
- Anyone in the enclosure needs to be aware of bee behavior and safe people behavior around hives and assumes all risks associated with the beehives.
- All P-Patch beekeepers must be aware of how to manage honey bee stings and identify symptoms of anaphylaxis type reactions. *Gardeners who will be working with the official beekeeper on the hives should also be aware of how to manage honey bee stings.*
- Beekeepers must perform and document regular maintenance on hives.
- A water source should be provided at all times.
- Beekeepers should follow legal and functional control methods for moth, mite and other disease prevention

## Requirements for Mentoring and Sharing

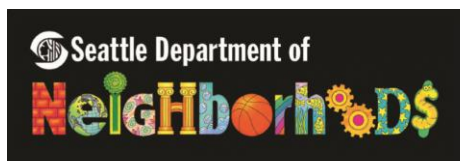
- Beekeeper is responsible for *mentoring interested folks who have gone through beekeeping training*, in the garden for the long term sustainability of the hives.
- Sale of honey and other hive products, after recouping hive expenses and costs associated with compliance should go to benefit the P-Patch garden and follow all state, local, and P-Patch regulations. Those gardens that use the honey produced for a fundraiser need to be aware of and follow all King County Health Department and WA State Department of Agriculture rules concerning the sale of hive products.

## Best Practice

P-Patch rules state: *Garden organically* (Organic methods only. NO synthetic chemicals including; pesticides, insecticides, herbicides, weed killers, and fertilizers. We recognize that most beekeepers employ some sort of non-prescriptive use of chemical treatments to keep their bees alive and that some form of chemical treatment is the standard pitched by most beekeeping clubs. Not all chemical treatments are equally bad and use of these treatments is by no means a requirement, many beekeepers use no treatments at all. At this time P-Patch will allow the use of chemicals in keeping bees however, we ask that all beekeepers operating within P-Patch's explore not using treatments or use the least toxic methods to keep colonies alive.

**Resources:** *Natural Beekeeping* by Ross Conrad (ISBN: 978-1-933392-08-0) and treatment free classes in Puget Sound <http://www.snoqualmievalleybeekeepers.org/2015/01/2015-beekeeping-classes/>

**For more information:** 206-684-0264 or [don\\_p-patch@seattle.gov](mailto:don_p-patch@seattle.gov)



**P-PATCH COMMUNITY  
GARDENING PROGRAM**